(b) whether NRDC has appointed some consultants for the purpose;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the present status of cement plants for which Agreements have been executed;

(e) whether NRDC has terminated some Agreements and black-listed any consultant;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the steps taken to ensure smooth functioning of such cement plants for which machinery etc. were supplied by NRDC approved consultant and fabricator?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) National Research Development Corporation (NRDC) has not executed any agreement during 1995-96 and 1996-97 for setting up of mini cement plants.

(b) and (c) NRDC has appointed six consultants and four fabricators for setting up of mini cement plants prior to 1995-96. The consultants are M/s. Paulsons Limited, Madras; M/s. Usha Mini Plant Corporation, New Delhi; M/s. Ganesh Industrial Service Agency, Ahmedabad; M/s. Jayems Engineering Co. Ltd., New Delhi; M/s. UAL Technologies, New Delhi and M/s. FACT Engineering & Design Organisation, Udyogmandal, Cochin. The fabricators are M/s. Laxmi Engineering Works, Udaipur; M/s. Minitch Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi; M/s. Jayems Perkim Pvt. Ltd., Bombay and M/s. Usha Mill Associates Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi.

(d) A total of 29 mini cement plants have been licensed by NRDC in the country during 1976-91, based on the know how developed by Regional Research Laboratory (RRL), Jorhat, many of which are running successfully. According to the available information, 3 plants out of the 29 plants for which agreements have been executed by NRDC have reported problems.

(e) and (f) NRDC terminated the agreement with one consultant viz. M/s. Usha Mini Plants Corporation, New Delhi on 1.2.1989. All the State Financial Institutions have been advised by NRDC not to finance any mini cement plant where M/s. Usha Mini Plants Corporation, New Delhi has been chosen as a consultant by the client.

(g) NRDC has examined the performance of its various licensed mini cement plants and deputed scientists at its own cost, as and when reported, to suggest solutions for ensuring their smooth functioning, although it was not obligatory on the part of NRDC to provide such services.

[Translation]

Abolition of Contract System

3527. SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to abolish the contract system to check the incidence of crime in Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) to (c) No, Sir. Railways have not recommended abolition of contract system because there is no report to indicate that contract system is contributing to increase in crime.

[English]

Power Projects

3528. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Union Government has intimated to the Andhra Pradesh that the Gadgil formula is coming in the way of Rs. 4.000 crore NTPC power project proposed to be set up in Visakhapatnam;

(b) if so, whether Prime Minister had earlier given assurance to the Chief Minister that green signal and final clearance for the construction of this project will be given soon; and

(c) if so, the reasons for not giving the clearance to this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) to (c) The setting up of the Simhadri Thermal Power Project (2x500 MW) in Vishakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh by National Thermal Power Corporation has been approved by the Central Government at an estimated cost of Rs. 3650.79 crores in July, 1997.

[Translation]

Removal of Fish Plates

3529. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the incidents of removal of fish plates have occurred frequently during the last four months in Bina-Vidisha section in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;